DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 132 625 CS 501 568

AUTHOR Louden, Allan
TITLE Limited Speech-Communication Faculty in Two-Year Institutions--A National Survey.
PUB DATE 76
NOTE 12p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Speech Communication Association (62nd, San Francisco, December 27-30, 1976)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS College Curriculum; *College Faculty; *Faculty Workload; Junior Colleges; National Surveys; Professional Associations; *Speech Curriculum
IDENTIFIERS *Speech Communication

ABSTRACT

In order to obtain information about speech programs in two-year colleges with two or fewer full-time speech communication faculty, a questionnaire survey was conducted in October 1976. Usable responses were obtained from 84 two-year institutions, a 56% response. Data are presented indicating the numbers and proportions of full-time and part-time faculty, curriculum offerings, off-campus and noninstructional activities, professional memberships, needs of the speech program, effects of the small number of speech faculty, and assistance which could be provided by professional organizations. (AA)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. Nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Allan Louden
TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER.

ED132625

LIMITED SPEECH-COMMUNICATION FACULTY IN TWO-YEAR INSTITUTIONS - A NATIONAL SURVEY

by

ALLAN LOUDEN*

In November, 1975 the SCA sponsored Conference on Speech Communication in the Community-Junior College met in Denver.[1] The Conference produced several recommendations for two-year institutions concerning curricula, co-curricular activities, staffing, instruction, research and professional issues. Major limitations, however, exist for implementing the recommendations and these may be inherent. Conferees recognized, "factors such as limited faculty . . . impose real constraints." While we are not lacking challenges as to productive ways of expanding and improving speech programs, a majority of two-year institutions do not have adequate faculty to meet the challenge.[2]

In an effort to profile the current situation, a survey was conducted (October, 1976) in which 84 two-year institutions returned usable responses to a questionnaire concerning limited faculty. This represented a fifty-six percent response rate. Because the total population of two-year schools with two or less full time speech communication faculty is unknown, an attempt was made to achieve a varied geographic distribution.[3] Fifty-eight percent of the institutions employ one full time faculty member in speech while thirty percent have two. The remaining twelve percent had no full time instructor in speech communication. Nearly two-thirds indicated the average load requirement to be 15 hours.

* Allan Louden, Assistant Professor of Speech Communications and Director of Forensics, Northwest Community College.

CS 501 548

Approximately one-half of the community colleges included in this survey had under 2,000 full and part-time students enrolled.[4]

PART-TIME FACULTY

Limited faculty programs indicated widespread use of part-time faculty. Fully seventy percent of the institutions employed at least one part-time instructor.

PART-TIME FACULTY

0	29.8%	(25)
1	34.5%	(29)
2	20.2%	(17)
3	9.5%	(8)
4	4.8%	(4)
5	0.0%	(0)
6	1.2%	(1)

The Denver Conference expressed concern about an overdependence on part-time personnel.[5] This may, however, be the only means by which limited faculty schools are able to provide any expansion in the program. A Virginia respondent expressed a frustration, "part-time staff do not take an active interest in forensics, on campus speech programs and professional activities. This places too much burden on one full time faculty member."

CURRICULUM

Excluding drama related courses, over one in three institutions offer only a fundamentals course in the speech area. This limitation seems to be one of necessity and not desire. A Utah school offers a typical comment, "With a limited staff, we spend most of our time teaching the required basic oral communications class. We would like to have time to do more in other areas."

Every institution offers a fundamentals course. While the inclusion of interpersonal communication seems to follow the national trend, thirty-two percent of the institutions offer public speaking as the only fundamentals option.

FUNDAMENTALS COURSE

Public Speaking Course only	32%	(27)
Interpersonal Communication Course only	1%	(1)
Combination course (Public & Interpersonal)	30%	(25)
Public Speaking & Interpersonal Course separately	22%	(18)
Public, Interpersonal & Combination separately	5%	(4)
Public & Combination separately	8%	(7)
Interpersonal & Combination separately	2%	(2)

Beyond the Fundamentals course, limited staff often restricts offering a varied speech communication program. A Mississippi instructor states, "It is difficult for students who are majoring in communications to get adequate course offerings in the Junior College level." One Missouri school added, "Because of the limited offerings, we have on occasion failed to keep some students for a full two-year term." The survey produced a strong consensus that additional course offerings would be desirable. Many schools, however, provide more diverse programs. Small Group Communication and Oral Interpretation are offered most often.

COURSE OFFERINGS

Public Speaking	67%	(56)
Oral Interpretation	58%	(49)
Combination (Fundamentals)	45%	(38)
Small Group Communication	42%	(35)
Interpersonal Communication	30%	(25)
Debate and Argumentation	37%	(23)
Advanced Public Speaking	20%	(17)
Persuasion	13%	(11)
Organizational Communication	7%	(6)
Nonverbal Communication	6%	(5)
Advanced Interpersonal	2%	(2)

A number of other courses are also offered. Nine institutions provided classes in Voice and Diction; six in Competitive Forensics, and four in Radio-TV. Specialized courses were also mentioned in speech for Business, Family, and Parliamentary Procedure. Most other courses were drama or journalism related. In limited faculty two-year institutions there seem to be almost no classes being provided for specialized groups. An Oregon instructor summarizes,

"staff limits the special offerings we could give. I believe there is a need."

OFF-CAMPUS AND NON-INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Several respondents in the survey indicated that meeting community needs was a goal of their program. However, only one in three offered classes off campus. Typically the indication was that campus day loads precluded expanding offerings designed for the community.

Slightly over forty percent were involved in some form of public service (i.e. consulting, speaking, etc.)

Twenty-one percent of the institutions maintained an intercollegiate forensics program. While several schools would like to develop extra-curricular programs, a Michigan respondent provided a common thought, "One full time staff member must teach the whole program (four different preparations). What time for extra-curricular?"

Only ten percent of those in a limited faculty situation were involved with research and publication. In Illinois one person related, "Our loads are so heavy that we cannot be doing all the research necessary to keep abreast of our discipline, let alone contribute much in the way of publication to help advance our field."

Thirty of the 84 respondents indicated membership in professional organizations. These tended to hold multiple memberships. A large majority have no professional organization contact. The Speech Communication Association accounted for most of the affiliations. Other professional groups have made little inroads in the limited faculty situation.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION MEMBERSHIP

Speech Communication Association (SCA)	25
International Communication Association (ICA)	3
American Forensic Association (AFA)	4

Regional Speech Associations (i.e. WSCA)	15
State Speech Associations	19
Other	3

PRIORITIES

Respondents were asked to indicate what they felt to be the greatest needs to be accomplished in their speech programs, if there were increased staffing. Seventy of the surveys ranked from 1 to 6 their priorities with their first choice being the highest priority and 6 the lowest priority.

INDEX FOR PRIORITIES OF NEEDS

Additional course offerings	2.37
Specialized classes	3.04
Off-campus & evening classes	3.11
Extra curricular speech activities	3.14
Involvement in professional organizations	4.14
Research and publications	5.23

The greatest need expressed by those in the limited staff situation was for additions to the curriculum. A large number of the questionnaires noted specifically needs for extended course offerings. An Illinois instructor related--he is "forced to teach fundamentals and not enough advanced classes which is not stimulating to the faculty." The need for increased emphasis for off-campus and evening classes, specialized classes (i.e. minority students, vocational communication, etc.), and extra-curricular activities (i.e. forensics, speakers' bureaus, etc.) was nearly equal. It seemed that most of the programs responding would like to grow in these directions if it were possible.

The lowest priorities were clearly involvement in professional organizations and research and publication.

When only the top priority for expansion was considered for each school, the pattern was emphasized.

HIGHEST PRIORITY NEED

Additional course offerings	50.0%	(35)
Specialized classes	15.7%	(11)
Off-campus & evening classes	14.3%	(10)
Extra-curricular speech activities	14.3%	(10)
Involvement in professional organization	4.3%	(3)
Research and publications	1.4%	(1)

It should be noted that many programs would like to expand in more than one area. Several schools have well developed programs in certain areas, and are indicating where they would like to expand.

LIMITED FACULTY (Advantages and Disadvantages)

Institutions involved in the survey were asked how their speech programs are affected by limited staffing. Seventy-four responded while ten did not. The most general perception held was that programs are restricted in multiple ways. Typical expressions parallel those made by an Oregon instructor:

> "With the limited staff it is impossible to enlarge our class offerings or to extend ourselves into off-campus programs. Because of the limited staff and strict budget, it is impossible for us to take on any extra-curricular programs or become involved in professional organizations."

Comments grouped into the following observations:

1. Classloads make other aspects of the program suffer. Frustrations were expressed that having too many responsibilities contributed to lessening instructor effectiveness. Seventeen respondents made reference to being "spread too thin" or being "worked to death." Many specific references were made to extra-curricular programs (drama and forensics). A Wyoming respondent claimed, "as the only faculty member in speech communications responsible not only for course offerings, but for inter-collegiate competition as well, I feel hampered in both areas and feel that the situation has had a negative effect on both areas."

2. Limited staffing is often reflected in split assignments. Many community college speech instructors are also responsible to English or drama programs. One Virginia response noted this precludes development of the speech program.
3. Potential for isolation and stagnation is increased.
4. Classes cannot be offered as frequently.

While these frustrations and perceptions are shared by many in the limited faculty situation, there are also positive aspects. A Kansas instructor spoke for many when she related, "If I had wanted a large program to work in, I could have gone into a large department. I like it here. There are rewards, particularly in molding a program to fit personal capabilities to community needs." Positive Aspects Included:

1. greater flexibility in developing the speech program
2. better able to keep abreast of course content
3. decision-making is less troublesome
4. easier to create the "esprit de corps" of a closely knit department

A few respondents indicated that although their staff was small, it was adequate to meet the needs for their institutions.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Those schools surveyed were asked how professional organizations could be of more assistance to their speech programs. The answers received are useful as expressions of possible solutions to problems associated with limited faculty institutions.

Forty-nine responded with suggestions. Thirty-five gave no response. Six respondents indicated they were very pleased with professional organizations and their services. Five others did not see how they could be of service to their particular program. Three respondents expressed a negative attitude. Professional organizations were characterized as involved in "ego-ism and career building."

Suggestions as to how professional organizations can be of help tend to group into the following areas:

1. Provides information and services.

   Fourteen of those answering would find additional information useful. Specific teaching methods and materials designed for community college students were mentioned most often. An Illinois school suggested development of curricular approaches which anticipate a student population of "adult" learners. A Colorado instructor felt there is a noticeable lack of materials designed for the community college level. An Oklahoma respondent would suggest that the journals become more sensitive to community college concerns.

   Because of the difficulty of becoming actively involved in professional organizations and semi isolation, several mentioned "back up consultants", "task-forces", and "curriculum advisors" who would actually visit the campus.

2. Promote the importance of speech communications in the curriculum.

   A very strong agreement was expressed in the questionnaire that speech organizations could provide valuable service by promoting the necessity of speech communications. A Tennessee comment was representative, "Launch a campaign to educate college administration on the value of the discipline." An Illinois school suggested that administrators be sent research oriented to the need for speech communication in career-oriented fields. Some even suggested that speech contributions be emphasized to legislative bodies. The thrust of the comments seemed to be that professional organizations should direct their attention to administrators rather than the instructors. Several noted this as the key to improving the limited staff situation.

3. Increase availability of professional meetings.

   Many respondents expressed the advantages of contact with peers and avoidance of "cultural deprivation". Concurrent with this was the problem that meetings are often so far that they are prohibitive. Suggestions included professional organizations funding more workshops in isolated areas and providing information in lieu of attendance at the meetings.

Other suggestions were made that have special impact for those with limited faculty.

An Oklahoma instructor asks that professional organizations push the idea that a greater variety of speech courses satisfy the basic requirement for transfer, thus relieving the pressures to teach only fundamental courses.

From California it is suggested that it is time professional organizations do something about credentials and not allow non-speech teachers to teach speech. A move in this direction would affect problems with part-time instructors and instructors with split assignments by demanding more full time speech personnel.

CONCLUSION

The survey provides normative data of Speech Communication programs in two-year institutions with limited faculty. It also provides a cross-section of attitudes and perceptions shared by speech professionals in small departments. Hopefully this will lead to a clearer understanding of limitation and problems faced by a majority of community college instructors. In addition, professional organizations may be advised of service needs for a major segment of the speech community.

FOOTNOTES

[1]John Muchmore and John Franklin White, ed., "Here's Looking At Us: A Report of the Denver Conference on Speech Communication in the Community-Junior College," Bulletin of the Association of Communication Administration, Issue 17 (August, 1976), 3-30.

[2]It appears that a majority of community-junior colleges employ two or less full time faculty, although specific data is unavailable. Carolyn R. Planck reported, "The Western and Eastern schools employ an average of 2.8 teachers per school, the Central area 2.2, and South 1.8." "(Two Surveys of Speech Education in U.S. Two-Year Colleges, "Bulletin of the Association of Departments and Administrations in Speech Communication," Issue 10 (October, 1974), 5-9). Ray M. Berko reported, ". . . sixty percent of the two-year institutions have three or less full time faculty members . . ." ("Training of Speech Instructors for the Community-Junior College", Central States Speech Journal, 25 (Summer, 1974), 149-150).

[3]Usable responses were from: CA, 10; CO, 6; GA, 2; HI, 1; ID, 2; IL, 5; KA, 4; MI, 6; MS, 4; MO, 7; MT, 1; NE, 3; NM, 1; OK, 4; OR, 4; TN, 2; TX, 4: UT, 1; VA, 5; VT, 2; WA, 6; WY, 5.
Institutions not responding may include those with more than two full time faculty members and those with no faculty in Speech.

[4]Figures used were as of June 1, 1976. (1976-77 College Facts Chart, The National Beta Club, Spartanburg, SC. 1976).

[5]Muchmore and White, p. 14.